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consequentialism. So do I. For one thing, I am not convinced that there is an “adequate rationale” for aggregating separate persons’ gains and losses in the way that consequentialism recommends. (This, of course, is also an objection to Kamm’s assumption that the saving of the five is really the “greater good.”) More importantly, there is plenty of logical space for developing alternative deontological solutions to the trolley problem. If we agree with Kamm that Driver Topple counts against Thomson’s solution, but we agree with Kamm’s critics that the PPH lacks an adequate rationale, then we might search for some other deontological principle that can accommodate more of our judgments. The trolley problem is young, as far as philosophical problems go, and it would be premature to conclude that the only candidate solutions are the DDE, the DDA, the PPH, or consequentialism.

Indeed, it is a virtue of the book that Kamm does not purport to have solved the trolley problem mysteries once and for all. Rather, the book is best seen as an overview of the important contributions that Kamm and her interlocutors have made to the literature. It is also a rich source of cases for testing new hypotheses—cases ranging from ingenious classics like Transplant, Driver, and By-stander, to some newer developments like Driver Topple and Thomson’s Loop Case, to some particularly perplexing cases involving tractors and bombs. The going is occasionally tough, especially when Kamm’s idiosyncratic methodology sends the dialectic down a winding track, but the trolley problem is still as real, pressing, and fascinating as ever, and it is helpful to have as one’s guide through the problem a philosopher who does not shy away from complexities.

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Kateb, George. *Lincoln’s Political Thought*.

Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2015. Pp. 256. \$24.95 (cloth).

This book analyzes Lincoln’s political philosophy and his moral and religious views. Among other things, Kateb discusses Lincoln as a writer, Lincoln’s commitment to human equality (which he calls Lincoln’s “Political Religion”), Lincoln’s racial views, and his understanding of the Constitution and defense of his suspension of habeas corpus during the American Civil War. Kateb begins with a historical overview of the controversies about American slavery and the “ferocious” hatreds and divisions to which they gave rise during Lincoln’s lifetime.

Kateb regards Lincoln as a very great leader who both kept the United States together and ended slavery. He views this as a remarkable achievement and writes: “Lincoln was by far the best person that could have held the power he did, the best that could have been hoped for. He saved the Union and abolished slavery and was perhaps the only president who could have done both and he did so in the only way he thought possible: by cautiously and in good time plausibly tying them together inextricably” (x). Kateb makes a strong case for these claims although he admits “it is foolhardy to be confident of counterfactuals” (xii). He also makes a strong case for the following claim: “The irony is that Lincoln could abolish slavery only because he was not an abolitionist until near the end of his career. This statement means that he became president only because he was not

an abolitionist or at least did not declare himself to be an abolitionist" (xii). This statement is surely true. Only a small percentage of people in the North were abolitionists in 1860, and no avowed abolitionist could have been elected president at that time. Winning the Civil War was necessary to bring about the abolition of slavery. If Lincoln had pushed for abolition at the beginning of the war, he would not have had enough support from the public or the soldiers in the Union army to win the war. This calls to mind something Lincoln said in his first debate with Stephen Douglas in 1858: "In this and like communities public sentiment is everything. With public sentiment nothing can fail; without it nothing can succeed."

Kateb strongly suggests that Lincoln's success depended on his not having correct moral views (or at least not stating them): "His [Lincoln's] whole political life illustrates the generalization that in democratic politics, perhaps in all politics, it is nearly impossible to do the right thing for the right reasons, actually held and honestly stated" (xiii). In this connection, he repeatedly speculates that before 1864 Lincoln might have been lying or dissembling by denying or understating his intention to end slavery (42, 91, and 216).

Kateb's tone is informal and conversational. He frequently indulges in ruminations and counterfactual speculations. He paints with a much broader brush than most analytic philosophers. This accounts for some of the strengths and weaknesses of the book. He is not afraid to take on big questions and defend bold claims and conjectures. His speculations address very important questions and are almost always interesting and worth thinking about. Although he doesn't always cite or marshal extensive historical evidence in support of his claims, his grasp of the relevant history and Lincoln's writings is very good. However, there is a certain looseness in his analysis and argument at points. He discusses racism in many contexts (and seems to think that Lincoln was a racist) but he never defines racism. One problem with this is that the concept of racism is used so broadly as to obscure important distinctions. Some racists endorse the mass murder or the enslavement of other races of people. But others who hold beliefs that are generally regarded as racist have considerable concern for the rights and welfare of people they take to be members of "inferior" races. Kateb talks about moral relativism and moral absolutism in connection with the morality of slavery but never adequately explains what he means by either term.

Kateb rightly stresses Lincoln's decisive role in not permitting the Confederate States of America to secede peacefully from the United States. Lincoln outmaneuvered the Confederates into attacking Fort Sumter and initiating the American Civil War. This was extremely important because it united public opinion in the North to fight the war and allowed Lincoln to keep the pledge he made in his First Inaugural Address not to begin a war (on this point, see my *Lincoln's Ethics* [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015], 35–40). Even though the Confederates fired the first shots by attacking Fort Sumter, it is arguable that it was the Confederacy, not the Union, which fought a defensive war. Before the beginning of the war, Confederate agents sought to divide the country and its property and debts peacefully. But Lincoln insisted that he would hold and defend federal property, including forts located within the Confederate states. The Confederacy had no intention of invading or attacking the Northern states. Fort Sumter was located in the harbor of Charleston, South Carolina, the epicenter of radical secessionism. By attacking Fort Sumter, the Confederates only

seized what they claimed as their own sovereign territory. The Union armies invaded and conquered the Confederate States while the Confederates fought against the Union invasion.

During the American Civil War, Lincoln suspended habeas corpus throughout the United States—this permitted the government to hold people in prison without trial. Lincoln's policies called for the arrest of "disloyal persons" who discouraged people from enlisting in the military or encouraged people to resist conscription (147). Kateb regards Lincoln's policies as justified for the most part and not an abuse of power because they combated much greater evils (143 and 161). Lincoln stopped well short of suspending democracy; the United States held free and open elections during the war despite the bitter divisions within the Union states.

Kateb offers considerable praise for Lincoln's Second Inaugural Address and the qualities of character it reveals. At a time when the Union was on the verge of winning the war and his own policies seemed to be vindicated, Lincoln did not gloat in triumph or play up his own leadership. Instead he brooded very darkly about the immense suffering caused by the war and the dreadful injustice and suffering inherent in American slavery; he conjectured that the war might be a just punishment from God to both the North and South for the great offense of American slavery. Kateb gives a very close reading of the following remarkable sentence from this address: "If we shall suppose that American slavery is one of those offenses which, in the providence of God, must needs come, but which, having continued through His appointed time, He now wills to remove, and that He gives to both North and South this terrible war as the woe due to those by whom the offense came, shall we discern therein any departure from those divine attributes which the believers in a living God always ascribe to Him?" Among other things, Lincoln was hoping to reunite the country, and he ended his address on a very conciliatory note with his famous peroration "with malice toward none with charity for all" (people often overlook that this phrase is followed and tempered by the words "with firmness in the right as God gives us to the right"). Despite his magnanimous tone, Lincoln correctly states that the war was caused by the South's desire to expand slavery and his address includes the very apt and biting words, "it may seem strange that any men should dare to ask a just God's assistance in wringing their bread from the sweat of other men's faces."

Kateb's overall assessment of Lincoln's character and leadership are very positive, but it is also mixed and very conflicted. Near the very end of the book he writes, "Looking back . . . I find that I have been driven in different directions, all of them rather extreme: extreme praise of Lincoln but not before he became president: great sympathy for him with more than a touch of unforgiving censure. I cannot offer a balanced judgment or a steady attitude or a portrait other than rough. He was always a good man and a great writer, but he became a great man only as president when among politicians he grasped better than any the fullness of the situation in its moral and practical complexity" (217). He makes clear the strong *prima facie* grounds for both praising and condemning Lincoln (these grounds make Lincoln such a fascinating subject for moral analysis).

As is appropriate, Kateb reserves most of his criticisms for Lincoln's racial attitudes. He analyzes some of Lincoln's policies and speeches which he claims show that Lincoln had inadequate concern for the rights and welfare of African

Americans and considerably underestimated the evils inherent in American slavery.

Kateb strongly criticizes Lincoln for his view that the men who framed the US Constitution were justified in allowing slavery to be protected by the Constitution.

Lincoln maintained that the men who framed the Constitution had no choice but to acquiesce to slavery in the document they were offering the people for ratification. The necessity, political necessity, justified their decision. (111)

Lincoln reasoned that incorporating slavery into the Constitution was a necessary price to pay for the great good of the Constitution. (114)

This, Kateb says, committed Lincoln to the erroneous and morally obtuse conclusion that slavery was a lesser evil than the states failing to adopt the Constitution to supersede the Articles of Confederation. (Kateb's claim about what this statement committed Lincoln to is contentious, because it is doubtful that the failure of the states to adopt the Constitution would have resulted in the end of American slavery.)

Kateb also notes ways in which the Constitution protected slavery and made it extremely difficult to end slavery. One provision of the Constitution requires the return of fugitive slaves (regardless of the laws about slavery in the states to which they flee). The Constitution forbids the federal government to prohibit the importation of slaves from Africa into any states that existed in 1788 for a period of twenty years. The Constitution permitted individual states to end slavery (as many Northern states did), but, under the Constitution, the nation could compel individual states to end slavery only by means of a constitutional amendment ratified by three-fourths of the states. In 1860 there were fifteen slave states and eighteen free states. Those fifteen states could easily block any such amendment. Since there are only fifty states now, fifteen states still have the power to block the passage of any constitutional amendment. As Kateb observes, the US Constitution made it impossible to end slavery without the consent of the slave states (66). In this connection, it should be noted that it was possible to ratify the Thirteenth Amendment (which completely abolished slavery in the United States) shortly after the end of the Civil War only because of severe restrictions on the voting rights of former Confederate soldiers. The ratification of the Thirteenth Amendment did not reflect the views of most whites in the former Confederate states. Kateb makes a strong case for saying that the US Constitution was not worth the reverence and high regard which Lincoln had for it.

Some of Kateb's other criticisms of Lincoln's racial views are overstated. In 1854, Lincoln said, "Much as I hate slavery, I would consent to the extension of it rather than see the Union dissolved, just as I would consent to any GREAT evil to avoid a GREATER evil" (114–15). Kateb claims, "When couched in these terms, the question then becomes whether disunion was a greater evil than slavery, especially if the disunion were peacefully accomplished. The moral answer is 'no'" (strictly speaking, the question is whether the extension of slavery was a greater evil than disunion). The view Lincoln states here seems to be morally obtuse. But

Kateb should have noted that Lincoln repudiated this view by the time he became president. During the time between his election and the attack on Fort Sumter, many ideas were proposed to placate the South and keep the country together. These proposals included adding new slave states (including Cuba) to the United States. Lincoln rejected these proposals and was not willing to put trying to keep the nation together ahead of the nonextension of slavery. His bad judgment about the relative evil of disunion versus the expansion of slavery in 1854 was corrected by 1861.

Kateb says that, although Lincoln hated slavery and white degradation of blacks, he “disliked blacks, not individually, but certainly as a group in the abstract” (89). This obscure statement puts Lincoln in a bad light, and Kateb’s evidence for it is inadequate. In 1858, Lincoln said, “All I ask for the Negro is that if you do not like him leave him alone” (89). This does not imply, as Kateb contends, that Lincoln thought that this dislike was understandable. Lincoln also said, “I am a Southern man with Northern principles, with Abolitionist proclivities” (90). Kateb to the contrary, this is not good evidence for thinking that Lincoln had “invidious race consciousness.” Kateb speculates that Lincoln’s dislike of blacks might have been the result of the fact that as a young man he and a companion were violently attacked (“with intent to rob or kill them”) by seven blacks while they were piloting a flatboat down the Mississippi near New Orleans (94). Kateb’s interpretation is a possible reading of the evidence, but other more charitable interpretations are also plausible.

This book presupposes some knowledge of the relevant historical background. Those who lack this knowledge will find some parts of the book difficult to follow and assess. But I warmly recommend the book to all moral and political philosophers who have the requisite historical knowledge. Kateb raises many important issues. He addresses historically important policies and decisions the consequences of which are still playing themselves out, as opposed to the wildly improbable hypothetical cases which philosophers often discuss. In democratic societies, moral and political ideals are enacted in fraught and messy political reality, and often leaders need to make morally dubious compromises to get things done. Lincoln’s long and determined battles against slavery combined with his reverence for and deference to an extremely unjust constitutional and legal system that protected slavery are among the very best illustrations of these issues. (Lincoln took his oath of office very seriously and felt duty bound to obey the law and uphold the US Constitution. In his First Inaugural Address, he read the section of the Constitution which calls for the return of fugitive slaves and promised to enforce it, adding that he took his oath “with no mental reservations.”) Lincoln’s deference and pandering to deeply flawed popular opinion combined with his attempts to change popular opinion are also marvelous examples for ethical analysis. He was a remarkable leader and powerful intellect whose ideas and writings are worthy of much more attention from philosophers than they have received to date.

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